AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1.   (original) A method for verifying the identity of one or more parties involved in the transmission of information, comprising the steps of:

(a)   generating, on the sender side, a first message to the receiver, wherein the first message includes a substantive message to be transmitted and a unique message identifier (UMI)

(b)   issuing, by one the parties, a second message concerning a posting to a central biometric authority (CBA), wherein the second message includes a biometric sample of the party, and the UMI, and a submission profile of the party;

(c)   providing, at the CBA, verification of the party's biometric sample; and

(d)   issuing, by the CBA, a third message including a verification result of the party.

2.   (original) The method of claim 1, wherein the party issuing the second message is the receiver.

3.   (original) The method of claim 1, wherein the party issuing the second message is the sender.

4.   (previously presented) The method of claim 2, further comprising the steps of:

(e)   the sender issues another message, concerning a posting to a central biometric authority (CBA), wherein the messages includes a biometric sample from the sender, the UMI, and a submission profile of the sender;

(f)   providing, at the CBA, verification of sender's biometric sample; and

(g)   issuing, by the CBA, messages including a verification result of the sender.

5.   **(original)** The method of claim 1, wherein the CBA has the capability to process biometric samples obtained from a plurality of biometric systems.

6.   **(original)** The method of claim 1, wherein the CBA utilizes a plurality of biometric systems and standardizes the verification results to enable results from different biometric systems to be compared.

7.   **(original)** The method of claim 1, wherein the CBA contains enrollee information profiles that include biometric templates and additional information or pointers to information about the enrollees.

8.   **(original)** The method of claim 5, wherein neither of the parties to the transaction obtains the biometric sample of another party.

9.   **(previously presented)** A method for verifying the identity of one or more parties involved in the transmission of information, comprising the steps of:

(a)   generating, on the sender side, a first message to the receiver, wherein the first message includes a substantive message to be transmitted and a unique message identifier (UMI)

(b)   issuing, by one the parties, a second message concerning a posting to a central biometric authority (CBA), wherein the second message includes a biometric sample of the party, and the UMI, and a submission profile of the party;

(c)   providing, at the CBA, verification of the party's biometric sample; and

(d)   issuing, by the CBA, a third message including a verification result of the party

(e)   wherein the CBA has the capability to process biometric samples obtained from a plurality of biometric systems; and

(f)   wherein the submission profile describes to the CBA information about the system used to capture the biometric sample.

10.   (original) The method of claim 2, wherein the substantive message is synchronously encrypted and the synchronous key is contained in the second message to the CBA and released to the receiver upon successful verification of the receiver's identity.

11.   (original) The method of claim 2, wherein the first message further comprises verification requirement information that provides the CBA with criteria that the sender sets forth in order for the receiver to successfully verify.

12., 13.   (canceled)

14.   (currently amended) A method for verifying the identity of one or more parties to a transaction using biometrics;

(a)   whereby a third party stores the biometric templates and performs the identity verification,

(b)   wherein a point of transaction (POT) operator verifies the identity of an authorized transactor (AT), and further comprising the steps of:

~~(a)~~(c)   generating, by the POT operator, a message to a ~~CBA~~ central biometric authority (CBA), wherein the message includes the AT's claimed identity, a biometric sample of the AT and a submission profile of the POT; and

~~(b)~~(d)   providing, at the CBA, verification of the AT's biometric sample; and

~~(c)~~(e)   issuing, by the CBA, a reply based upon the verification result.

15.   (previously presented) A method for verifying the identity of one or more parties to a transaction using biometrics:

(a)   whereby a third party stores the biometric templates and performs the identity verification,

(b)   wherein a point of transaction (POT) operator verifies the identity of an authorized transactor (AT), and further comprising the steps of:

(c)   generating, by the POT operator, a message to a central biometric authority (CBA), wherein the message includes the AT's claimed identity, a biometric sample of the AT and a submission profile of the POT;

(d)   providing, at the CBA, verification of the AT's biometric sample; and

(e)   issuing, by the CBA, a reply based upon the verification result;

(f)   wherein the reply includes the AT's verification information.

16.   **(previously presented)** A method for identifying a proxy in an identity verification system, comprising the steps of:

(a)   generating, by an authorized transactor (AT), a first message related to a proxy authorization posting, the first message including the AT's biometric sample, a ~~UMI~~ a unique message identifier (UMI), a submission profile, and an instruction block;

(b)   generating, by a point of transaction (POT) operator, a second message concerning a POT posting to a central biometric authority (CBA), the second message including the proxy's claimed ID, the proxy's biometric sample, and the POT submission profile; and

(c)   generating, at the CBA, a reply to the second message, the reply including the AT's name and a verification result.

17.   **(original)** The method of claim 16, wherein the first message further comprises verification requirement information that provides the CBA with criteria that sets forth the criteria necessary for the proxy to successfully verify.

18.   **(original)** The method of claim 16, wherein the instruction block is a message to the POT operator as to what the proxy is allowed to do, the instruction block containing expiration data in addition to the allowed actions.

19. **(original)** A system for verifying the identity of one or more parties involved in the transmission of information, said system comprising:

(a) a first message generator for generating, on the sender side, a first message to the receiver, wherein the first message includes a substantive message to be transmitted and a unique message identifier (UMI);

(b) a second message issuer for issuing, by one the parties, a second message concerning a posting to a central biometric authority (CBA), wherein the second message includes a biometric sample of the party, and the UMI, and a submission profile of the party;

(c) a verifier for providing, at the CBA, verification of the party's biometric sample; and

(d) a third message issuer for issuing, by the CBA, a third message including a verification result of the party.

20. **(previously presented)** The method of claim 9, wherein the party issuing the second message is the receiver.

21. **(previously presented)** The method of claim 9, wherein the party issuing the second message is the sender.

22. **(previously presented)** The method of claim 20, further comprising the steps of:

(g)   the sender issues another message, concerning a posting to a central

biometric authority (CBA), wherein the messages includes a biometric sample from the

sender, the UMI, and a submission profile of the sender;

(h)   providing, at the CBA, verification of sender's biometric sample; and

(i)   issuing, by the CBA, messages including a verification result of the

sender.

23.   **(previously presented)** The method of claim 9, wherein the CBA utilizes a

plurality of biometric systems and standardizes the verification results to enable results

from different biometric systems to be compared.

24.   **(previously presented)** The method of claim 9, wherein the CBA contains

enrollee information profiles that include biometric templates and additional information

or pointers to information about the enrollees.

25.   **(previously presented)** The method of claim 9, wherein neither of the parties to

the transaction obtains the biometric sample of another party.

26.   **(previously presented)** The method of claim 20, wherein the substantive

message is synchronously encrypted and the synchronous key is contained in the second

message to the CBA and released to the receiver upon successful verification of the

receiver's identity.

27. **(previously presented)** The method of claim 20, wherein the first message further comprises verification requirement information that provides the CBA with criteria that the sender sets forth in order for the receiver to successfully verify.